

February 27, 1959.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

I have directed the Acting Secretary of State to confer with Gordon Gray with a view of calling together a special meeting of the statutory members of the National Security Council and including the Acting Secretary of State and the Attorney General. The meeting will not be listed as a formal one of the Security Council.

The purpose will be to review all of the measures and actions we propose to take in the event that the Soviets actually go through, on May 27th, with their threat to leave East Germany and decline thereafter to take any responsibility with respect to Berlin.

These steps have been fairly well thought out, but we must review them to see that our thinking is up-to-date with respect to them. Moreover, and even more important, we need to go a step further and consider what action might be required in an emergency, in the event that during any period of excess tension either before or after the specified date there were brought about unexpected developments either through miscalculation or muddling.

It seems to me that a number of questions ought to be examined specifically, such as:

- (a) What measures should we take to keep Congressional leaders informed of developments in the situation?
- (b) What would be our logical reaction to any unforeseen crisis brought about by a Soviet statement that could take the form of an ultimatum?
- (c) How could we be sure of the necessary support from Congress even though we might suddenly face a critical emergency and would be under a compulsion to act quickly so as to avoid any unnecessary damage to ourselves;



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- (d) How can we preserve, throughout, the necessary secrecy?
- (e) Should we be taking any specific steps to warn the American people and the West of the potential gravity of the situation, but at the same time not unnecessarily alarming them?
- (f) How do we keep coordination with our NATO allies, and more particularly, Britain, Germany and France.

In such a meeting innumerable other questions will arise. The big thing is that we do not neglect any point that deserves attention.

This paper will be kept in the secret files and must, for the moment, be known only to General Goodpaster and Major Eisenhower. Both of them will be required to read it, but will not have a copy of it.

General Goodpaster is charged with keeping in touch with Mr. Gray to determine when such a meeting could be held. Any questions that Mr. Gray has respecting time, personnel to be present, and subjects to be discussed should be brought to my attention.

12.  
JSD

D.D.E.

